



Resolution 2011 (2014)¹

Final version

Counteraction to manifestations of neo-Nazism and right-wing extremism

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly unequivocally condemns the increasing number of manifestations of neo-Nazism and right-wing extremism and the rise of neo-Nazi parties and movements in Europe, some of which have entered parliament at national or European level. This is not an isolated phenomenon particular to some Council of Europe member States, but a problem of pan-European dimension. It often lies dormant in society until conditions favourable to its emergence arise. It can thus only be effectively tackled on the basis of shared experience and good practice among member States.

2. If popular disappointment over harsh economic conditions and frustration triggered by governmental failure to implement comprehensive migration policies may, in some cases, partly explain the rising popularity of neo-Nazi parties as a “protest vote”, this only further enhances the responsibility of government representatives and democratic politicians, who should stand up and unite in defending democratic values. Neo-Nazis should not be ignored; nor should they be turned into martyrs.

3. Although symbols and structures of the past, such as party logos reminiscent of swastikas, are still being used, the strategies of neo-Nazi activists in the public arena are becoming progressively more sophisticated and thus more difficult to identify and counteract. The ever-increasing use of the Internet as the main platform for extremist propaganda and co-ordination makes monitoring and counteraction even harder.

4. The Assembly notes that the majority of young people who join right-wing extremist groups do so in their early teens or even before. Neo-Nazi parties also tend to develop programmes and structures that particularly attract children not yet of voting age, at schools or holiday camps.

5. The Assembly therefore believes that in the fight against neo-Nazism, the focus should be on prevention through education and awareness raising, and early reaction, at grass-roots level, to any manifestations of neo-Nazism, whether violent or not, be they by organised groups or radicalised individuals. Identification of early signals should allow for timely action against radicalisation and nip neo-Nazi activities in the bud, before the problem spins out of control.

6. Experience has shown that, to be effective, timely action should be co-ordinated by the entire community and accompanied by a clear political message, at the highest level, that any manifestation of neo-Nazism, including hate crime and hate speech, cannot be tolerated in a democratic State governed by the rule of law. Victim support and support measures for those wishing to leave such extremist movements are also indispensable tools in counteracting neo-Nazism.

1. Assembly debate on 30 September 2014 (30th Sitting) (see Doc. 13593, report of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, rapporteur: Ms Marietta de Pourbaix-Lundin; and Doc. 13602, opinion of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, rapporteur: Ms Olga Kazakova). *Text adopted by the Assembly on 30 September 2014 (30th Sitting)*

See also [Recommendation 2052 \(2014\)](#)



7. In the light of these considerations, and referring to concrete examples of experience and good practice, the Assembly calls on member States to:

- 7.1. design cross-sectoral strategies to prevent and combat neo-Nazi ideology, including social, economic and cultural strategies to reduce the breeding grounds for this ideology;
- 7.2. develop national action plans and appoint national co-ordinators against right-wing extremism to provide a framework for and co-ordination among public institutions at all levels and civil society initiatives;
- 7.3. promote and support, through regular public funding, specific civil society initiatives and projects designed to prevent or combat neo-Nazism or other forms of racism, hatred and anti-Semitism, in the local arena and everyday life, including online;
- 7.4. enhance research, including pedagogical research, as well as international co-operation and exchange of good practice in the field of preventing and combating neo-Nazism;
- 7.5. continue to support, including through voluntary contributions, or start implementing (as appropriate) the Council of Europe campaign entitled the No Hate Speech Movement, involving young people all across Europe.

8. More specifically, the Assembly calls on member States:

- 8.1. as regards prevention, to:
 - 8.1.1. encourage and support, through public funding, joint and well co-ordinated timely action against radicalisation by the entire community, including local police and all societal actors, such as schools, childcare services, parents' groups, mayors and relevant municipal services, churches, trade unions and professional organisations, as well as civil society groups, including voluntary organisations, victim support groups, refugee councils and youth representatives;
 - 8.1.2. specially train law-enforcement officials in preventive action and provide and support preventive policing tools (such as "empowerment conversations") addressed mainly to teenagers who show signs of radicalisation and their families;
 - 8.1.3. ensure the continuing development of strategies and technologies to reduce the influence of social media on the recruitment to and promotion of neo-Nazism;
 - 8.1.4. ensure that any relevant data, analyses and especially early signals detected by local actors and civil society are shared with public institutions and law-enforcement forces engaged in the prevention of or fight against neo-Nazism, and that they receive quick and proper attention at political level;
- 8.2. as regards education, to:
 - 8.2.1. enhance education for democratic citizenship and human rights awareness measures in schools, starting from the primary level, thus enabling children to stand up for democratic values from the outset; this should also include education against hate speech and in particular its online forms;
 - 8.2.2. enhance teaching of 20th-century history and in particular that of the period around the Second World War;
 - 8.2.3. train teachers on human rights and democratic citizenship and assist parents in actively supporting their children;
 - 8.2.4. support educational projects and teaching methods aimed at tackling anti-democratic ideologies, such as neo-Nazism and anti-Semitism, a phenomenon which goes well beyond neo-Nazi groups;
- 8.3. as regards law enforcement, to:
 - 8.3.1. provide, and effectively implement, a comprehensive legal framework on hate speech and hate crime, in line with the specific recommendations made by the Assembly in its Resolution 1967 (2014) on a strategy to prevent racism and intolerance in Europe, and those made by other Council of Europe bodies, notably the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights;

- 8.3.2. make party leaders and members, including members of parliament, criminally liable for using hate speech or committing hate crime or any other criminal offence, reacting in a timely and effective manner;
- 8.3.3. train judges, prosecutors and law-enforcement officials on hate crime and hate speech so that they can also identify crimes with a neo-Nazi background;
- 8.3.4. ensure efficient co-operation and co-ordination, based on regular exchange of information, among the various law-enforcement bodies;
- 8.3.5. strike the right balance between the need to protect, on the one hand, freedom of expression and the right to privacy of members of right-wing extremist groups and, on the other, the fundamental rights of democratic groups wishing to react and prevent or block manifestations organised by right-wing extremists;
- 8.3.6. ensure accelerated proceedings in the investigation, prosecution and trial of cases of neo-Nazi violence by adolescents, in co-operation with the families of the offenders and civil society networks, focusing on efficient support measures for those wishing to leave extremist movements, so as to enhance the deterrent effect on other adolescents;
- 8.3.7. design strategies for police and intelligence services, including online policing, to face the special challenges raised by neo-Nazi hate speech online;
- 8.4. as regards victim support and witness protection, to:
 - 8.4.1. encourage victims of neo-Nazism and witnesses to speak up in line with the specific recommendations made by the Assembly in its Resolution 1967 (2014);
 - 8.4.2. enhance victim support measures, promote victim support groups and ensure regular public funding for this purpose;
 - 8.4.3. provide specific protection to illegal immigrants who have been victims of hate crimes until a judicial decision becomes final;
- 8.5. as regards support to those wishing to leave extremist movements, to:
 - 8.5.1. design strategies and programmes to help and support those wishing to leave neo-Nazi movements, as well as their families, including by offering ways of changing their outlook on life, jobs or professional training;
 - 8.5.2. engage former participants in the neo-Nazi sphere with the necessary personal skills and motivation in efforts to extricate others;
 - 8.5.3. promote and support, including through regular public funding, civil society exit projects.

9. The Assembly further urges:
 - 9.1. politicians, both at national and European levels, to take up the debate with neo-Nazis and expose them publicly by clearly and unequivocally challenging, rejecting and condemning neo-Nazi ideology and rhetoric;
 - 9.2. democratic parties to unite around a “democratic consensus” and unanimously oppose neo-Nazi parties inside and outside national parliaments;
 - 9.3. national parliaments to:
 - 9.3.1. ensure that no public funding is allocated to parties promoting hate speech and hate crime;
 - 9.3.2. adopt codes of conduct including safeguards against hate speech and hate crime on any grounds.
10. The Assembly invites its members to join and support the activities of:
 - 10.1. the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and all parliamentary groups who work towards the same objective;
 - 10.2. the national committees set up in the context of the Council of Europe “No Hate Speech Movement”.

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11. In order to raise public awareness against hate crime in Europe, and to show solidarity with those targeted and those left to mourn, the Assembly fully supports the initiative by the youth campaign to make 22 July the “European Day for Victims of Hate Crime”, in commemoration of the day of the terrorist attacks in Oslo and on Utøya Island, Norway.